

## Reader Recipes

### Best Easiest Fudge

18 oz. chocolate chips  
1 can sweetened condensed milk  
2 tsp vanilla  
1 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Combine first 3 ingredients in a bowl and microwave for about 2 min., or until chips are "melty". Be careful not to scorch the chips, especially milk chocolate chips. Stir until chips are completely melted and mixture is smooth. Stir in nuts and pour into greased 9 by 9-in. pan. Cool until set.

### Easy Creamy Corn Dip

1 cup sour cream  
1/2 cup mayonnaise  
8 oz. grated sharp cheddar cheese  
1/4 cup canned Old El Paso green chiles, undrained  
1 tbsp ground cumin  
1/4 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp garlic salt  
Fresh ground black pepper to taste  
4 cups canned whole kernel corn, drained  
4 or 5 slices bacon, cooked and diced  
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
Multigrain tortilla chips, as desired

With electric mixer beat sour cream, mayo, cheese, chiles and spices on medium speed until well blended. Stir in corn, bacon, and cilantro until well combined. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hr. but no longer than 24 hrs. before serving. Serve with chips.

### Christmas Popcorn Cake

5 qts. popped popcorn  
1/2 cup butter  
1/3 cup oil  
16 oz. marshmallows  
Salted peanuts  
Gumdrops

Melt together butter, oil and marshmallows. Stir well. Add salted peanuts or other nuts. Add red and green gumdrops. Stir and shape into a wreath on a wax paper-covered serving tray. If desired, drizzle with heated caramel topping.

### Stain Remover

2/3 cup ammonia  
2/3 cup Dawn dish soap  
6 tbsp washing soda  
2 cups warm water

Mix together, put in spray bottle. Squirt on fabric. Use small brush to remove stain.



Bacon grease drains out through spout welded into one end of waffle iron, and is collected in a soup can.



## He Cooks Bacon In His Shop

If you love the taste of bacon but don't like how it splatters grease in a frying pan, you'll like this idea from Matt McNaughton, Foothills, Alberta, who converted an old waffle iron into a bacon cooker.

McNaughton drilled a hole into one end of the waffle iron and welded an aluminum drain spout in it in order to drain the bacon grease into a soup can below. He made a stand for the waffle iron by building a small stand that's set at a slight angle, which allows grease to drain into the spout.

"I cook the bacon in my shop while I'm doing other small jobs so no time is wasted," says McNaughton. "It works like a charm. I usually put 3 strips of thick-cut bacon on the waffle iron, then close the lid and let the bacon cook for 6 min. The bacon stays nice and straight and is evenly cooked."

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## Combating Loneliness After Loss

"Losing 5 people extremely close to me in just 3 years created a huge drain on my ambition and the way I looked at my life every day," says Canadian Bernadette Alseth. "So I started a small friendship group at the coffee shop where I volunteer and now we meet every week to share stories, laughs and support each other."

Alseth and her "Coffee Friendship Club" encourage those age 55 and over dealing with grief, loss or divorce to stop in. The group opens its arms and hopes to grow so they can hold workshops and other social activities. For now, they gather to drink coffee, play cards, and just have good supportive conversation together.

Alseth says there are a lot of hours in the day and some of those days can be extremely long. "People who feel isolated can be a part of our group and feel more a part of something solid," she says. The group meets weekly and Alseth says "individuals need to take that first step to reach out or join in. That's the key."

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Bernadette H. Alseth

## "Culvert" Trash Barrel Holder

"I'm a caretaker at a local RV campground with about 1,000 acres of recreational land for hiking and fishing, and therefore a lot of plastic trash barrels to take care of. I got tired of barrels blowing away or falling over after animals climbed into them, so I used sections of an old culvert to make trash barrel holders. They're heavy and have proven they will stay put, even in winds up to 105 mph," says Robert Hittle, Liberal, Kan.

He started with a thrown-away, 24-in. dia. culvert with damaged ends and cut the undamaged section into 9-rib, 2 1/2-ft. long pieces. He drilled several 3/4-in. dia. holes in the bottom of the barrel so it won't collect water, then set the empty barrel inside the culvert piece. A pair of 6-in. oblong holes cut into opposite sides of the barrel are used as handholds.

"It's nothing fancy but it works. Raccoons aren't able to knock the barrels over, and I don't think even a bear could," says Hittle. "If the barrel is located in a very exposed place I sometimes drive a T-post into the ground to stabilize it. I torch a couple sets of small holes about 2 1/2 in. apart into one side of the culvert, at about the second rib from the top and bottom. Then I wire the post and culvert together."

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Trash barrel sets inside an old culvert section, which stays put.

# FARM SHOW®

## New Products For The Farm, Ranch Home

### Redneck Man Lift

No instructions are necessary for the "Man Lift" Scott Hendershot installed in his shop bathroom.

Plenty of males - and a few females - need to answer nature's call while visiting him at his Minnesota chainsaw carving business. He solved the hygienic dilemma of lifting a toilet seat with a small hole drilled in a back riser under the toilet seat. An old work boot shoestrings is knotted and run through it as well as holes in an unfinished stud wall next to the toilet. A knot on the outside wall makes a handy pull cord.

After laughing, men who use it totally appreciate it, and say the man lift works much faster than high tech versions they have seen.

While helpful for the men, it hasn't changed anything for females who use the bathroom. They still need to put the seat back down.



Toilet seat is lifted by pulling on a cord.

### Flag Holder Swivels In The Wind

Dave Meiners, Edgerton, Minn., used pvc tubing to come up with a nice looking, inexpensive mounting stand for his American flag.

"It's designed to let the flag spin around in the lightest winds. It looks nice, and I always know which way the wind is blowing," he says.

The stand uses a 4-ft. long, 1/2-in. dia. metal rod that's driven about 2 ft. into the ground. Meiners drops a washer over the rod that falls to the ground to keep the rod from ever turning. Then he slips a 3-ft. long, 3/4-in. dia. pvc tube over the rod and onto the washer. It serves as a spacer and a base that allows the tube to rotate.

A 45-degree elbow is placed on top of the tube and supports a 14-in. long, 1-in. dia. tube fitted at the top with a "T" elbow, which supports another tube with an end cap at the bottom that supports the flag.

"I like how it looks and how it swivels - it doesn't take much wind for the flag to rotate," says Meiners. "The stand is in our front yard

where a security light shines on it at night. I drilled holes in the end cap so that water can drain out, and also glued all the joints together to make them solid. I usually take the entire assembly down for the winter because I don't want it getting beat up by the weather."

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Flag-holding tube rides over a metal rod so it's free to rotate.